

Cc: Sisk, Richard[Sisk.Richard@epa.gov]; Madigan, Andrea[Madigan.Andrea@epa.gov]
To: Land, Kelcey[Land.Kelcey@epa.gov]; Piggott, Amelia[Piggott.Amelia@epa.gov]
From: Bohan, Suzanne
Sent: Fri 8/21/2015 3:53:10 PM
Subject: Fwd: can you look into this please?

See request below. I believe Richard's earlier email would be useful in explaining the history.
Would you review and provide response to Shaun/ Joan/ Martin?
Thanks,
Suzanne

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McGrath, Shaun" <McGrath.Shaun@epa.gov>
Date: August 21, 2015 at 10:25:31 AM CDT
To: "Hestmark, Martin" <Hestmark.Martin@epa.gov>, "Bohan, Suzanne" <bohan.suzanne@epa.gov>, "Card, Joan" <Card.Joan@epa.gov>
Subject: can you look into this please?

Mine's owner says he tried to keep out EPA but was threatened with fines

By Valerie Richardson

Thursday, August 20, 2015

DENVER — The owner of the Colorado's Gold King Mine says he tried to stop the Environmental Protection Agency from gaining access to his property, but that he relented after the agency threatened to pound him with ruinous fines if he refused.

Mine owner Todd Hennis said that he had little choice four years ago but to allow in an EPA-led crew, which triggered the Aug. 5 blowout that sent 3 million gallons of toxic orange wastewater down the Animas River.

Iconic television host opens up about her secretive lifestyle, how the crowd reacts is awful

“When you are a small guy and you’re having a \$35,000 a day fine accrue against you, you have to run up the white flag,” Mr. Hennis told CBS4 in Denver.

Mr. Hennis said he opposed having the EPA investigate leakage from the inactive mine near Silverton, Colorado, because he had tangled with the agency in previous years over its work at another mine he owns in Leadville, Colorado.

“I said, ‘No, I don’t want you on my land out of fear that you will create additional pollution like you did in Leadville,’” Mr. Hennis told Colorado Watchdog.org. “They said, ‘If you don’t give us access within four days, we will fine you \$35,000 a day.’”

The EPA has admitted that its agents accidentally unleashed the acidic flood, which has since contaminated the San Juan River in New Mexico and seeped into Lake Powell in Utah, albeit in very low concentrations.

The Interior Department and the EPA’s Office of Inspector General are investigating the circumstances leading up to the accident, while at least two House committees are also expected to hold hearings on the spill.

Sens. John McCain, Arizona Republican, and Tom Udall, New Mexico Democrat, sent a letter Tuesday to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee requesting an oversight hearing on the contamination’s impact on the Navajo Nation.

Shaun McGrath

Regional Administrator

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